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OREGON OPERATIONS OFFICE

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EPA-REGION 10

U.S. EPA
ATTN: Harbor Comments
805 SW Broadway, Suite 500
Portland, OR 97205

Portland is a river town. What happens on the Willamette River affects our city and all of its residents and businesses. I have known about plans to clean up hazardous materials in the riverbed for some time, but I don't believe that the Environmental Protection Agency's current plan to clean up this Superfund Site is a logical one. Fortunately, the EPA must listen to a local community's input before moving forward, and I wanted to have my voice heard on this issue.

The EPA has proposed a massive project that would involve dredging up the materials from the riverbed and transporting them to a landfill. This would be very expensive, but even worse, it would undo the natural healing of the river that has taken place since testing was done 12 years ago. The EPA's plan would damage our city and our river by digging up the entire bottom. It just isn't logical to undertake an action that will cause more harm than good, and to spend a large amount of money doing it. Any plan that looks at a single point of data and not at continuing data does not make sense. If you have new data on the same area that you also have old data for, the new data is what you must look at to see where things are going. The more recent EPA data from two years ago shows at least a two-fifths reduction in contaminants from earlier testing. It's clear the natural river restoration process is working.

The cost of the EPA's dredging plan would mean higher taxes and utility bills for residents. Many like me who are retired and living on fixed incomes would be seriously hurt. Years of ongoing construction, noise, and closure of the river would affect the economy of waterfront businesses and impact the Port of Portland as well. I enjoy going to the waterfront now to sightsee. If it were turned into an ongoing construction zone, it would affect me somewhat, but it would affect area businesses very much, perhaps even causing some of them to go out of business.

The EPA is asking what Portland residents think, so I'm telling you. We want a more flexible plan, managed by locals who really understand our city and its needs and know how to address this problem best. As a long-time Portland resident, I don't want to see the cleanup of the Willamette River harm the city that it's intended to protect. Agencies with great experience in this area, such as the Army Corps of Engineers, suggest that a less aggressive approach would be better. I fully agree.

Sincerely,

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Portland, OR 97206